

SECTION 1

LAND USE

GENERAL LAND USE

Goal 1.A: To promote the wise, efficient, and environmentally-sensitive use of Placer County lands to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents and businesses.

Policies

- 1.A.1. The County will promote the efficient use of land and natural resources.
- 1.A.2. The County shall permit only low-intensity forms of development in areas with sensitive environmental resources or where natural or human-caused hazards are likely to pose a significant threat to health, safety, or property.
- 1.A.3. The County shall distinguish among urban, suburban, and rural areas to identify where development will be accommodated and where public infrastructure and services will be provided. This pattern shall promote the maintenance of separate and distinct communities.
- 1.A.4. The County shall promote patterns of development that facilitate the efficient and timely provision of urban infrastructure and services.
- 1.A.5. The County shall not approve intensive forms of development or land divisions into parcels of 10 acres or less within any city's sphere of influence where that city's general plan calls ultimately for urban development except where the County General Plan or applicable Community Plan designates the area for urban development. The County shall inform cities in a timely manner when applications for development within their sphere of influence are filed with the County and shall consider the city's ultimate plans for the relevant area during project review. In such cases, Policy #16 in Part III shall apply to such development projects.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Goal 1.B: To provide adequate land in a range of residential densities to accommodate the housing needs of all income groups expected to reside in Placer County.

Policies

- 1.B.1. The County shall promote the concentration of new residential development in higher-density residential areas located along major transportation corridors and transit routes.
- 1.B.2. The County shall encourage the concentration of multi-family housing in and near downtowns, village centers, major commercial areas, and neighborhood commercial centers.
- 1.B.3. The County shall encourage the planning and design of new residential subdivisions to emulate the best characteristics (e.g., form, scale, and general character) of existing, nearby neighborhoods.

- 1.B.4. The County shall ensure that residential land uses are separated and buffered from such major facilities as landfills, airports, and sewage treatment plants.
- 1.B.5. The County shall require residential project design to reflect and consider natural features, noise exposure of residents, visibility of structures, circulation, access, and the relationship of the project to surrounding uses. Residential densities and lot patterns will be determined by these and other factors. As a result, the maximum density specified by General Plan designations or zoning for a given parcel of land may not be realized.
- 1.B.6. The County shall require new subdivided lots to be adequate in size and appropriate in shape for the range of primary and accessory uses designated for the area.
- 1.B.7. The County shall require multi-family developments to include private, contiguous, open space for each dwelling.
- 1.B.8. The County shall require residential subdivisions to be designed to provide well-connected internal and external street and pedestrian systems.
- 1.B.9. The County shall discourage the development of isolated, remote, and/or walled residential projects that do not contribute to the sense of community desired for the area.
- 1.B.10. The County shall require that all residential development provide private and/or public open spaces in order to insure that each parcel contributes to the adequate provision of light, air, and open space.

MIXED USE SPECIFIC PLAN AREA

Goal 1.C: To designate the Boulder Ridge area for future Rural Residential development.

- 1.C.1. Potentially large areas redesignated for increased densities as part of this General Plan shall be considered through the specific plan process. The Boulder Ridge area is one such area and it has been designated as Rural-Residential in the land use diagram. This area, to be known as the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area, shall be subject to the development standards outlined in Appendix C.

COMMERCIAL LAND

Goal 1.D: To designate adequate commercial land for and promote development of commercial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents and visitors and maintain economic vitality.

General Commercial Areas Policies

- 1.D.1. The County shall require that new commercial development be designed to encourage and facilitate pedestrian circulation within and between commercial sites and nearby residential areas rather than being designed primarily to serve vehicular circulation.
- 1.D.2. The County shall require new commercial development to be designed to minimize the visual impact of parking areas on public roadways.

- 1.D.3. The County shall require that new, urban, community commercial centers locate adjacent to major activity nodes and major transportation corridors. Community commercial centers should provide goods and services that residents have historically had to travel outside of the area to obtain.
- 1.D.4. The County shall require that significant new office developments locate near major transportation corridors and concentrations of residential uses. New office development may serve as buffers between residential uses and higher-intensity commercial uses.

Downtown Areas/Village Centers Policies

- 1.D.5. The County shall encourage existing and new downtowns/village centers to provide a variety of goods and services, both public and private.
- 1.D.6. The County shall promote use of first floor space in new buildings in downtowns/village centers for retail, food service, financial institutions, and other high-volume commercial uses.
- 1.D.7. The County shall encourage new downtowns/village centers and new commercial projects and areas to be designed to maintain a continuous retail facade on all street frontages, except for public plazas and pedestrian passages between the front and rear of buildings.
- 1.D.8. The County shall require minimal, or in some cases no, building setbacks for commercial and office uses in new downtowns/village centers.
- 1.D.9. The County shall encourage parking in downtowns/village centers to be consolidated in well-designed and landscaped lots or in well-located parking structures.
- 1.D.10. The County shall encourage the preservation of historic and attractive buildings in existing downtowns/village centers, and encourage new development to enhance the character of downtowns/village centers.
- 1.D.11. The County shall require that existing and new downtowns/village centers and development within them be designed to integrate open spaces into the urban fabric where possible, especially taking advantage of any natural amenities such as creeks, hillsides, and scenic views.

Implementation Programs

- 1.1. The County shall review the Zoning Ordinance to identify revisions that could enhance the vitality of downtowns/village centers within unincorporated communities. Depending on the results of that review, the County shall initiate Zoning Ordinance revisions.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Planning Commission
Board of Supervisors
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding: General Fund

- 1.2. The County shall modify its Design Guidelines Manual to include standards for the development of downtowns/village centers in new development areas.

Responsibility: Planning Department
 Department of Public Works
 Planning Commission
 Board of Supervisors
 Time Frame: FY 94-95
 Funding: General Fund

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Goal 1.E: To designate adequate land for and promote development of industrial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents for jobs and maintain economic vitality.

Policies

- 1.E.1. The County shall only approve new industrial development that has the following characteristics:
- a. Adequate infrastructure and services;
 - b. Convenient connections to the regional transportation network, including connections to existing transit and other non-automobile transportation;
 - c. Sufficient buffering from residential areas to avoid impacts associated with noise, odors and the potential release of hazardous materials;
 - d. Minimal significant adverse environmental impacts; and
 - e. Minimal adverse effects on scenic routes, recreation areas, and public vistas.
- 1.E.2. The County shall designate specific areas suitable for industrial development and reserve such lands in a range of parcel sizes to accommodate a variety of industrial uses.
- 1.E.3. Until such time as a JPA is created for the Sunset Industrial Area (see Policy 1.N.12), the County shall review all proposed development projects with the adjacent city and jointly prepare appropriate development infrastructure and public service standards for such projects. (See also Policy 1.A.5.)

PUBLIC AND QUASI-PUBLIC FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 1.F: To designate adequately-sized, well-located areas for the development of public facilities to serve both community and regional needs.

Policies

- 1.F.1. The County will encourage the concentration of public and quasi-public facilities. New and expanded government offices and other professional offices should be encouraged to locate on land near existing government offices.
- 1.F.2. The County shall seek to locate new public facilities necessary for emergency response, health care, and other critical functions outside areas subject to natural or built environment hazards.

- 1.F.3. The County shall require public facilities, such as wells, pumps, tanks, and yards, to be located and designed so that noise, light, odors, and appearance do not adversely affect nearby land uses.

RECREATION LAND USE

Goal 1.G: To designate land for and promote the development and expansion of public and private recreational facilities to serve the needs of residents and visitors.

Policies

- 1.G.1. The County will support the expansion of existing winter ski and snow play areas and development of new areas where circulation and transportation system capacity can accommodate such expansions or new uses and where environmental impacts can be adequately mitigated.
- 1.G.2. The County shall strive to have new recreation areas located and designed to encourage and accommodate non-auto mobile access.
- 1.G.3. The County shall continue to require the development of new recreational facilities as new residential development occurs.
- 1.G.4. The County shall support the development/relocation of a recreation/sports/fair complex ranging in size from 100 to 300 acres in the area generally west of Rocklin between Roseville and Lincoln. The location should recognize appropriate environmental, circulation, and infrastructure constraints.

AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

Goal 1.H: To designate adequate agricultural land and promote development of agricultural uses to support the continued viability of Placer County's agricultural economy.

Policies

- 1.H.1. The County shall maintain agriculturally-designated areas for agricultural uses and direct urban uses to designated urban growth areas and/or cities.
- 1.H.2. The County shall seek to ensure that new development and public works projects do not encourage expansion of urban uses into designated agricultural areas.
- 1.H.3. The County will maintain large-parcel agricultural zoning and prohibit the subdivision of agricultural lands into smaller parcels unless such development meets the following conditions:
- a. The subdivision is part of a cluster project and such a project is permitted by the applicable zoning;
 - b. The project will not conflict with adjacent agricultural operations; and
 - c. The project will not hamper or discourage long-term agricultural operations either on site or on adjacent agricultural lands.
- 1.H.4. The County shall allow the conversion of existing agricultural land to urban uses only within community plan areas and within city spheres of influence where designated for urban development on the General Plan Land Use Diagram.

- 1.H.5. The County shall require development within or adjacent to designated agricultural areas to incorporate design, construction, and maintenance techniques that protect agriculture and minimize conflicts with adjacent agricultural uses.
- 1.H.6. The County shall require new non-agricultural development immediately adjacent to agricultural lands to be designed to provide a buffer in the form of a setback of sufficient distance to avoid land use conflicts between the agricultural uses and the non-agricultural uses. Such setback or buffer areas shall be established by recorded easement or other instrument, subject to the approval of County Counsel. A method and mechanism (e.g., a homeowners association or easement dedication to a non-profit organization or public entity) for guaranteeing the maintenance of this land in a safe and orderly manner shall be also established at the time of development approval.

[See also policies/programs under Goal 7.A., Agricultural Land Use; Goal 7.B., Land Use Conflicts; and Goal 7.C., Economic Viability of Agriculture.]

OPEN SPACE, HABITAT, AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Goal 1.I: To establish and maintain interconnected greenbelts and open spaces for the protection of native vegetation and wildlife and for the community's enjoyment.

Policies

- 1.I.1. The County shall require that significant natural, open space, and cultural resources be identified in advance of development and incorporated into site-specific development project design. The Planned Residential Developments (PDs) and the Commercial Planned Development (CPD) provisions of the Zoning Ordinance can be used to allow flexibility for this integration with valuable site features.
- 1.I.2. The County shall require that development be planned and designed to avoid areas rich in wildlife or of a fragile ecological nature (e.g., areas of rare or endangered plant species, riparian areas). Alternatively, where avoidance is infeasible or where equal or greater ecological benefits can be obtained through off-site mitigation, the County shall allow project proponents to contribute to off-site mitigation efforts in lieu of on-site mitigation.

[See also policies/programs under Goal 6.B., Wetland and Riparian Areas, starting on page 91; Goal 6.C., Fish and Wildlife Habitat, starting on page 92; Goal 6.D., Vegetation, starting on page 96; and Goal 6.E., Open Space For the Preservation of Natural Resources, starting on page 98.]

MINERAL RESOURCES

Goal 1.J: To encourage commercial mining operations within areas designated for such extraction, where environmental, aesthetic, and adjacent land use compatibility impacts can be adequately mitigated.

Policies

- 1.J.1. The County shall require new mining operations to be designed to provide a buffer between existing or likely adjacent uses, minimize incompatibility with nearby uses, and adequately mitigate their environmental and aesthetic impacts.

- 1.J.2. The County shall require that new non-mining land uses adjacent to existing mining operations be designed to provide a buffer between the new development and the mining operations. The buffer distance will be based upon an evaluation of noise, aesthetics, drainage, operating conditions, topography, lighting, traffic, operating hours and air quality.
- 1.J.3. The County shall discourage the development of any uses that would be incompatible with adjacent mining operations or would restrict future extraction of significant mineral resources.
- 1.J.4. The County shall discourage the development of incompatible land uses in areas that have been identified as having potentially significant mineral resources.
- 1.J.5. The County shall require that all mining operations prepare and implement reclamation plans that mitigate environmental impacts and incorporate adequate security to guarantee proposed reclamation.
- 1.J.6. The County shall require that plans for mining operations incorporate adequate measures to minimize impacts to local residents and County roadways.

Implementation Programs

- 1.3. The County should, in consultation with the California Division of Mines and Geology, evaluate the relative value of potentially-significant mineral deposits identified in the General Plan Background Report and designated as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) in relationship to other mineral resources of the same type in the County or region. If these mineral deposits are determined to be easily replaced by other substitute deposits, the County should continue to apply existing policies and plans to allow extraction of these resources. If these deposits are found not to be easily substituted, the County should amend the Countywide General Plan or applicable community plan as necessary to direct incompatible growth away from these sites.

Responsibility: Planning Department
 Planning Commission
 Board of Supervisors
 Time Frame: FY 94-95; 95-96
 Funding: General Fund

VISUAL AND SCENIC RESOURCES

Goal 1.K: To protect the visual and scenic resources of Placer County as important quality-of-life amenities for County residents and a principal asset in the promotion of recreation and tourism.

Policies

- 1.K.1. The County shall require that new development in scenic areas (e.g., river canyons, lake watersheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines and steep slopes) is planned and designed in a manner which employs design, construction, and maintenance techniques that:
 - a. Avoids locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes;
 - b. Incorporates design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of structures and graded areas;
 - c. Maintains the character and visual quality of the area.

- 1.K.2. The County shall require that new development in scenic areas be designed to utilize natural landforms and vegetation for screening structures, access roads, building foundations, and cut and fill slopes.
- 1.K.3. The County shall require that new development in rural areas incorporates landscaping that provides a transition between the vegetation in developed areas and adjacent open space or undeveloped areas.
- 1.K.4. The County shall require that new development incorporates sound soil conservation practices and minimizes land alterations. Land alterations should comply with the following guidelines:
 - a. Limit cuts and fills;
 - b. Limit grading to the smallest practical area of land;
 - c. Limit land exposure to the shortest practical amount of time;
 - d. Replant graded areas to ensure establishment of plant cover before the next rainy season; and
 - e. Create grading contours that blend with the natural contours on site or with contours on property immediately adjacent to the area of development.
- 1.K.5. The County shall require that new roads, parking, and utilities be designed to minimize visual impacts. Unless limited by geological or engineering constraints, utilities should be installed underground and roadways and parking areas should be designed to fit the natural terrain.
- 1.K.6. The County shall require that new development on hillsides employ design, construction, and maintenance techniques that:
 - a. Ensure that development near or on portions of hillsides do not cause or worsen natural hazards such as erosion, sedimentation, fire, or water quality concerns;
 - b. Include erosion and sediment control measures including temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas;
 - c. Minimize risk to life and property from slope failure, landslides, and flooding; and
 - d. Maintain the character and visual quality of the hillside.

SCENIC ROUTES

- Goal 1.L:** To develop a system of scenic routes serving the needs of residents and visitors to Placer County and to preserve, enhance, and protect the scenic resources visible from these scenic routes.

Policies

- 1.L.1. The County shall designate scenic routes within the County in order to preserve outstanding scenic quality within different geographic settings.
- 1.L.2. The County shall use scenic routes to link major points of historical and cultural interest and recreational activity within the County.
- 1.L.3. The County shall protect and enhance scenic corridors through such means as design review, sign control, undergrounding utilities, scenic setbacks, density limitations, planned unit developments, grading and tree removal standards, open space easements, and land conservation contracts.

- 1.L.4. The County shall provide for landscaping and/or landscaped mounding along designated scenic corridors where desirable to maintain and improve scenic qualities and screen unsightly views.
- 1.L.5. The County shall encourage the development of trails, picnicking, observation points, parks, and roadside rests along scenic highways.
- 1.L.6. The County shall protect and maintain historical landmarks and historical monuments along scenic routes.
- 1.L.7. The County shall encourage the use of bicycles as an alternative mode of travel for recreational purposes in scenic corridors.
- 1.L.8. The County shall include aesthetic design considerations in road construction, reconstruction, or maintenance for all scenic routes under County jurisdiction.
- 1.L.9. The County shall support anti-litter, beautification, and cleanup programs along scenic routes.
- 1.L.10. The County shall coordinate scenic route programs among local, regional, and state jurisdictions, recognizing that scenic routes are a resource of more than local importance.

Implementation Programs

- 1.4. The County shall identify and formally designate and adopt a system of scenic routes.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding: General Fund

JOBS-HOUSING BALANCE

Goal 1.M: To work toward a jobs-housing balance.

Policies

- 1.M.1. The County shall concentrate most new growth within existing communities emphasizing infill development, intensified use of existing development, and expanded services, so individual communities become more complete, diverse, and balanced.
- 1.M.2. The County shall encourage large residential projects to be phased or timed to occur simultaneously with development that will provide primary wage-earner jobs.
- 1.M.3. The County shall encourage the creation of primary wage-earner jobs, or housing which meets projected income levels, in those areas of Placer County where an imbalance between jobs and housing exists.

Implementation Programs

- 1.5. The County shall establish and maintain a program to monitor the jobs-housing balance in Placer County. The monitoring program should include the following elements:

- a. Annual changes and five-year trendlines for the number of jobs and number of housing units and, if available, workers per household.
- b. Annual changes and five-year trendlines for household incomes compared with the median prices and rents of housing.
- c. Changes in the transportation system or related communications technologies that would significantly affect current reliance on automobile commuting.

In monitoring the relationships among these variables, the Sierra resort and Lake Tahoe area should be distinguished from the western part of the County to the extent practical. Data from incorporated cities should be included in the analysis of changes and trends.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Economic Development
Time Frame: FY 94-95; annually
Funding Source: General Fund

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1.N: To maintain a healthy and diverse local economy that meets the present and future employment, shopping, recreational, public safety, and service needs of Placer County residents and to expand the economic base to better serve the needs of residents.

Countywide Policies

- 1.N.1. The County shall promote economic expansion based on Placer County's unique recreational opportunities and natural resources.
- 1.N.2. The County shall encourage the retention, expansion and development of new businesses, especially those that provide primary wage-earner jobs, by designating adequate land and providing infrastructure in areas where resources and public facilities and services can accommodate employment generators.
- 1.N.3. The County shall endeavor to protect the natural resources upon which the County's basic economy (e.g., recreation, forestry, agriculture, mining, and tourism) is dependent.
- 1.N.4. The County shall focus economic development efforts on projects that will maximize long-term net revenues to the County.
- 1.N.5. The County shall encourage flexibility in development standards to accommodate uses that provide a substantial economic benefit to the community.
- 1.N.6. The County shall consider waiving or reducing fees for new development that provides a substantial benefit to the community, such as large numbers of primary wage-earner jobs, affordable housing, or needed health facilities. Such consideration shall include identification of possible alternative funding sources to offset the foregone revenues.
- 1.N.7. The County shall strive to coordinate its economic development efforts with the efforts of cities and other economic development organizations, including local chambers of commerce.

- 1.N.8. The County shall actively and regularly solicit the views of the business community in matters affecting Placer County's economic climate and development.
- 1.N.9. The County shall maintain cooperative working relationships among County departments so that the broader concerns of the County (e.g., environmental quality, affordable housing, congestion, continued employment opportunities) are given adequate consideration.

South Placer Policies

- 1.N.10. The County shall support the development of primary wage earner job opportunities in the South Placer area to provide residents an alternative to commuting to Sacramento.
- 1.N.11. The County shall retain undeveloped industrially-zoned land in the unincorporated area for future use.
- 1.N.12. The County shall seek the establishment of a joint-powers authority (JPA) between the County and the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, and Lincoln in order to improve the provision of infrastructure in the incorporated and unincorporated areas in and around the Sunset Industrial Area. The JPA is to also develop an economic development strategy with the goal of improving the economic development potential of the region.

Foothill Policies

- 1.N.13. The County shall strive to ensure continued employment opportunities in resource-based industries.
- 1.N.14. The County shall support development of tourist and recreational facilities that extend the Foothill area's tourist season.

High Sierra Policies

- 1.N.15. The County shall support development of tourist and recreational facilities that extend the High Sierra's tourist season.

Implementation Programs

- 1.6. The County will support the continued efforts of the Placer County Economic Development Board to increase understanding of business needs and to better coordinate economic development efforts with other jurisdictions in the County and the region.

Responsibility: Board of Supervisors
County Executive

Time Frame: Ongoing

Funding: General Fund

- 1.7. The County will continue to pursue streamlining of the development project review process to reduce the time required for review of new economic development proposals.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Permit Streamlining Committee

Time Frame: Ongoing
Funding: General Fund

- 1.8. The County will petition the Local Agency Formation Commission to modify the spheres of influence of the Cities of Rocklin, Roseville, and Lincoln to remove the Sunset Industrial Area.

Responsibility: County Executive
Planning Department
Board of Supervisors
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding: General Fund

- 1.9. As part of the Sunset General Plan update, the County shall review its land use permitting requirements to identify changes to facilitate expedited permit processing in the Sunset area.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Economic Development
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding: General Fund

- 1.10. As part of the Sunset General Plan Update, the County shall seek the establishment of a joint-powers authority for incorporated and unincorporated lands in and around the Sunset Industrial Area. The County is to consider implementing the following tasks:

- a. Infrastructure design, finance and construction.
- b. Development of a regional economic development strategy.
- c. Approval of revenue and cost sharing agreements between all authority participants.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Economic Development
Affected landowners
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding: General Fund

DEVELOPMENT FORM AND DESIGN

Goal 1.O: To promote and enhance the quality and aesthetics of development in Placer County.

Policies

- 1.O.1. The County shall require all new development to be designed in compliance with applicable provisions of the Placer County Design Guidelines Manual.
- 1.O.2. The County shall require that specific plans include design guidelines for all types of development within the area covered by the plan.
- 1.O.3. The County shall require that all new development be designed to be compatible with the scale and character of the area. Structures, especially those outside of village, urban, and commercial centers, should be designed and located so that:

- a. They do not silhouette against the sky above ridgelines or hilltops;
 - b. Roof lines and vertical architectural features blend with and do not detract from the natural background or ridge outline;
 - c. They fit the natural terrain; and
 - d. They utilize building materials, colors, and textures that blend with the natural landscape (e.g., avoid high contrasts).
- 1.O.4. The County shall require that new rural and suburban development be designed to preserve and maintain the rural character and quality of the County.
- 1.O.5. The County shall require that new development at entrances to rural communities be designed to include elements such as signage, landscaping, and appropriate architectural detailing to help establish distinct identities for such communities.
- 1.O.6. Historically or architecturally significant buildings should be preserved and not be substantially changed in exterior appearance in ways that diminish their historical character, unless doing so is necessary to avoid or mitigate hazards, and other means of mitigation are infeasible. Such structures should be preserved and used as focal points of community design.
- 1.O.7. The County shall require that mixed-use areas include community focal points to serve as gathering and/or destination points. Examples of focal points include civic centers, parks, fountains, monuments, and street vistas. On-site natural features, such as wetlands and streams, can also function as focal points.
- 1.O.8. The County shall, where appropriate, require new development to provide activity pockets along public sidewalks as pedestrian amenities, including such features as benches, sitting ledges, and mini-parks.
- 1.O.9. The County shall discourage the use of outdoor lighting that shines unnecessarily onto adjacent properties or into the night sky.
- 1.O.10. The County shall require that in downtowns/village centers the tallest buildings be clustered in the core area and that building heights transition down to the scale of buildings in the surrounding area.

Implementation Programs

1.11. The County will modify its Design Guidelines Manual to address selected rural communities. While they should not require a specific architectural theme or style, except in historical districts, the guidelines should address the following

- a. Appropriate setbacks, building siting, building height and mass, landscaping, lighting, and signage;
- b. The type, size, location, and planting of street trees;
- c. The location and design of turnouts and pedestrian crossings;
- d. Designation of pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle trails; and
- e. Location and design of transit stops and ride-share centers.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Department of Public Works

Time Frame: FY 94-95

Funding: General Fund